

Friend Of Education Award – Monday, August 6th, 2018

I am excited this morning to award a very special person for the Friend of Education Award. She has supported the schools in so many ways over the past several years as well as supporting me in my career as an art teacher and my pursuit to become a teacher. I am honored to present to you this year's Friend of Education Award recipient, my mother, Phyllis Davis.

This morning, on behalf of the Miamisburg City Schools, I want to honor Phyllis for all of the hours and energy she has devoted to the district. Phyllis has always been interested in education. She was a National Honor Society student when she attended high school here in Miamisburg in the late 50s. She has always had a thirst for knowledge and has always been good with numbers. (This math quality, she did not pass it down to me) She has taught Sunday School to the youth in her church for probably around 50 years, off and on, and still teaches Sunday School lessons to this day.

If Phyllis had attended college, she probably would've studied to become a teacher. Education is something she values very much and it is very evident through all the hours she has devoted in volunteer work to our school system over the past 20 years. 20 years! Yes, I've been teaching for 20 years. I'm not sure where the time has gone but ever since my first year of teaching in 1998, my mom has been helping me with the art program at each elementary school where I work. At the beginning of the school year she comes in and helps me ready my classrooms by straightening things, putting away new supplies, and getting the supplies ready on each art table. During the school year, if I have a special display I want to create, she will come in and glue the artworks to colored construction paper frames so that the art looks nice and is easier to hang. It would be hard for me to estimate how many artworks she has framed down through her years of volunteering (remember, math is not my strong suit) but it is in the several thousands! If an art show is coming up she will come in and help create tags with each student's name and then attach them to the artworks so they're ready for display. She does this for art shows I have at my buildings and then each spring for the Fine Arts Festival. At the end of the school year when it's time to clean up and ready the room for the summer she will come to each of my rooms and help me put supplies away, clean tables and cabinets, and do anything she can to help me get each room finalized. She never complains and if it's at all humanly possible she will be there, and she spends 3, 4, 5 hours at a time helping me. I don't know how I would do it without her. And because of all of those hours she gave down through the years so many boys and girls have had the privilege of seeing their artwork on display at the art shows, encouraging their creativity and enhancing their education. The art program is not the only area that Phyllis has devoted her volunteer hours at Miamisburg Schools. She also volunteered to read with 1st graders at Bauer. This is what Lisa Ankeney had to say about her experience with Phyllis.

"I have had the pleasure of knowing Phyllis as a family friend for many years, and also as a mentor and volunteer at Bauer Elementary. Phyllis dedicated many hours and years to tutor our first-grade students.

Each of our first-graders eagerly awaited to be the Super Star of the Classroom because they knew it was finally their turn to work with Mrs. Davis. Not only were they excited to see her, but they also got the impression from her caring and compassionate ways that she was just as excited to see them, as well. Phyllis had a gift of making each student feel special. Her infectious smile and ability to explain directions in a heartening voice could calm even the most anxious children.

Her joy, patience, gentle reassurances, and loving care created a safe environment for our kids. She exercised a compelling charm which inspired and encouraged our struggling readers to work hard and take challenges. Students would bring stacks of books to read with her, and on many occasions have a personal story, or five, ready to share. For many, Phyllis was the source of much needed devotion and affection. She gave her unconditional love, kindness, patience, and comfort to each child. She also had a special intuition to know which children needed extra tender care, and which children needed extra blessings. She was the role model of the perfect school-grandmother, all about giving warm hugs and creating sweet memories.

I can honestly say that Phyllis created a little softer, a little kinder, and a little warmer environment for our young first grade students.”

Phyllis, we want to thank you today and honor you for devoting your extra time and energy to the Miamisburg City Schools to promote and further the education of our youth!